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Hints for the Home.

PLATE-glass doors to book-cases are a mistake, as nothing looks so out of place behind glass as books do.

FOR a bridal present a contemporary proposes to frame a small mirror with white velvet about five inches deep, and on the corners to paint sprays of flowers of a bright color, thrown carelessly on. On the glass itself a small branch, bright with rosy flowers and tiny leaves, is negligently laid.

ONE of the most interesting features of the table decoration at the recent farewell banquet in London to Irving was the doilies, on which were printed some good photographs of the actor, encircled with an embroidery design. Any portrait can in a similar manner be applied to almost any smooth fabric, and it is perfectly fast in washing. The novelty, however, has not yet reached this side of the Atlantic.

IT may be said that oak is best adapted to the dining-room, as everything therein should be substantial; as mahogany, walnut, or inlaid ebony, to the reception-room, because all therein should be rich and luxurious, and that the lighter kinds of upholstery are more appropriate to the bed-chambers, since the prevailing air of a dormitory should be one of thorough cleanliness; yet there is no necessity to circumscribe the range of individual selection.

THE library ought to be furnished and fitted with the fixed intention to secure for this room as quiet and reposeful an effect as is compatible with a full light, but carefully exclude all strong sunlight. Book-cases should be arranged so that the light may enable one at all times readily to read the title of every book in its place. The top shelf of a book-case should, if possible, always be within reach, that is to say the under side of the cornice or covering shelf should not be more than seven feet from the floor.

FURNITURE in bedrooms should be as light in construction as is consistent with the strength required, and made of light wood. Ash furniture, oak, and satin wood are very suitable. Wherever possible it is much to be desired on the score of health, that furniture should always be made in such a manner as to be easily moved. It might well be raised clear of the floor, so as to avoid anything like dust-traps. For the same reason flat-topped articles, as wardrobes, should be kept as low as practicable, that servants' labor may be saved, and the chance of dust accumulation reduced.

THE Misses Garrett are of opinion that ground-glass "darkens" windows, and in this view most of our builders seem to coincide, for they rarely introduce it except for the purpose of shrouding in mystery the unsightliness of back premises. This is a decided misconception; for every particle attracts and reflects a ray of light, and therefore it irradiates rather than obscures. Even French window-curtains will be found to produce the same effect, although, of course, in a lesser degree. It were well this should be borne in mind, for few who have travelled in Europe will have failed to observe that, notwithstanding the comparative gloominess of the climate of England, there is more glare in English houses than in those of their French neighbors.

THE wider the bridge which separates the art of the painter from that of the decorator, the more they will mutually benefit each other. We may at once perceive this in the instance

of a jardinière embellished in the ordinary way with depicted flowers. Not only do these, howsoever well executed, suffer by the presence of real flowers, but the brilliancy of the latter is necessarily impaired by the proximity of painted ones; since these, if they do nothing else, divert attention from the principal objects. A bouquet will look much better surrounded by a pattern of geometric, or quasi-geometric, design, tricked out with deep neutral tint, than with any amount of pictorial embellishment; because, both in design and color, there is a contrast.

IT is not always easy to strike a proper balance of utility and splendor, but in the matter of sitting-room curtains, which, from their position, have but slight wear and tear, and if of honorable material may give life service, it will be economy to be rationally liberal in views. Richness of color and softness of material are eminently desirable points in window curtains, and are to be found in velvet, velvet and silk, silk and wool, or wool alone. In rooms where there is sparse decoration, patterned curtains will have their advantage, and active hands may gain a long reward by fitting embroidery. Where it is desired that curtains should be long and looped back with bands, choose only for color and texture. If rich patterns are chosen, the curtains should fall in simple unbroken folds and just reach the floor.

A SHABBY frame to a chimney-glass may be easily improved by covering it with velvet. A succession of small shelves, covered with the same velvet, is then ranged up and down the wall upon each side, with narrow valances embroidered in silks or crewels. A pretty pedestal for a statue, bust, or large vase may be contrived in the same way, the pedestal itself being of light pine. A very beautiful one exposed in a London upholsterer's window was of regulation form, and covered with rich crimson plush. On each of the four sides a panel of old gold plush was let in to the crimson, the edges outlined with gold and crimson gimp to conceal the joining. Upon these old gold panels was an elegant, but simple pattern of appliqué leaves, and one large flower in pale cream satin, outlined with heavy button-hole stitch of brown.

MUCH may be done to relieve the dull and depressing out-look of windows in large cities by the judicious use of glass leaded up in patterns or set in fine woodwork of geometric design. Color and painted subjects may be introduced, but much caution is required to be used, for it is quite possible that the opposite side of the way may spoil the color, and almost obliterate the effect of the finer lines in the painted work. Where it is not wished to incur the expense of new sashes, leaded glazing can be fixed against the existing glass, either of sash or French casement, at a small cost. But fine mahogany framing, hinged like folding shutters, is a better plan if it can be afforded, as it has certain practical advantages not possessed by the ordinary leaded up work, is capable of more artistic treatment, and is certainly more comfortable and domestic-looking.

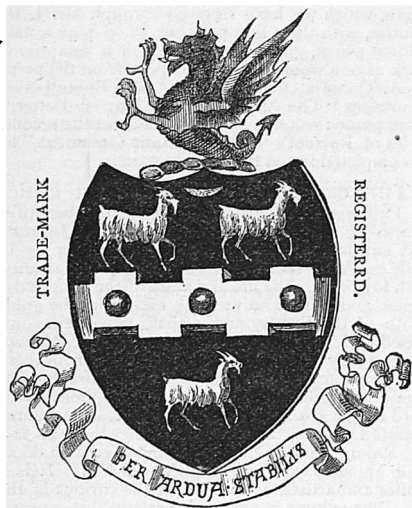
A BROAD stripe of fancy-colored Madras muslin, with colored flowers harmonizing with the shade of the glass vases used, is recommended for table decoration by a correspondent of The London Queen, who says: "The Madras muslin is fashionable on dinner tables, and looks well over the white cloth. I mean the kind used for curtains and toilet drapery, which has a cream ground, and is almost covered with faintly colored flowers in quaint shades of greens, blues, and pinks. In the hand the colors are indistinct, but over the white cloth they show up. The edges are hemmed, but could be edged with corresponding tinted lace, and the width of the muslin depends on that of the table, but should just leave room for the plates all round. Sometimes only the centre of the table is thus covered, the length being, however,

greater than the width. Another novelty is to lay coffee-colored lace down the centre of the table, and the doilies to match, or with an edging of the coffee lace. This looks pretty. The edges of the centre-piece are either rounded or square."

CABINETS, corner cupboards, and over-mantels look well with paintings upon gold canvas inserted into their panels, also piano fronts, door panels, and ornamental woodwork over doors. Small pieces of canvas can also be painted and inserted into woodwork for other decorative objects. The best gold canvas is gilded twice, and is therefore expensive, but it is very durable, and resists the action of the atmosphere. Its surface is slightly rough, and presents an admirable background for flower painting and for rough figure designs. Trace the outline upon the canvas with the help of tracing and carbonized paper, and be careful not to grease the canvas in any way; then paint in the design with oil paints and sable brushes in the ordinary manner, but without much working up or going over. Put the tint on at once, and soften it down while wet, so as not to clog the canvas with too much color; leave the gold canvas as a background, shading it with burnt sienna or Vandyck brown if any shadows are required to be thrown on it. Use ordinary medium with the oils, but do not varnish when the work is completed.

AS to whether there should be a dado or not, a recent writer says: "They were once common, but were superseded by plain walls during the Louis Quatorze period. There is no doubt that plain walls, lightly papered or tinted, impart an idea of expanse which is by no means undesirable, and that the effect of dados is to cramp." At the same time he finds two good reasons in their favor. The first is, being generally dark, they serve as a background to the complexion, hair, and dress of the inmates, and everything else in a room; and the second is, that, in conjunction with carpet-borders (which are to be strongly recommended), they keep the furniture well to the wall, and group it together. The mistake usually committed is the darkening of the wall as well as the dado. Theoretically, there may be no objection to this, for we know by experience that the darker the surroundings the more the complexion stands out against them. Yet our rooms are generally so small that no measures for increasing apparent expanse, or for the diffusion of light, should be neglected. A compromise, then, which insures the attainment of all these objects, is effected by retaining the dado and lightening the walls. Where pictures are to be hung, of course exceptions must be made.

INSTEAD of the ordinary roller-shades for the sitting-room, little curtains of delicate soft material, such as white muslin, Tussore silk, or Madras muslin, to run with tiny rings sewn on, on slim brass rods, are becoming more and more popular. These little curtains should divide in the middle, allowing of partial or entire withdrawal, when a perfectly unobstructed space, smaller or larger, would be left for airiness. Fine holland makes very pretty curtains, and offers fair opportunity for effective embroidery. The charming folds of delicate stuffs; the pleasant semi-transparent background; the arrangements for withdrawal, allowing only the most pleasant views from the window—for there is art in the drawing or withdrawing of curtains—the perfect freedom for ventilation, commend them to favorable consideration. The simplest style of outline embroidery, such as a row of stiff daisies slight and slim, yellow and white, with green leaves outspread, placed along the lower hem of each little curtain, would look well. The Madras muslin, being faintly colored and patterned, needs no embroidery. This muslin, or Tussore silk, or other soft delicate material, is most suitable for festoon blinds, which draw up by means of many runners into graceful folds.



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